

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, October 8, 2006

Passage: Esther 4

Memory Passage: John 12:24

TODAY: *From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?*

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Esther 4:1-3.** What was the response of the Jews when they heard about the king's decree?
- (b) What actions did Mordecai take? How does this seem contrary to trusting in God?
- (c) Read 2 Samuel 12:9-24. What was David's response when he heard about the sickness of his child? Was this an appropriate response? Explain your answer.
- (d) How long did David fast and pray? What was the outcome (the result) of his praying? How did he respond afterwards? What does this show us about his trust in God?
- (e) Are tears an appropriate response for believers (2 Kings 20:5; Psalm 56:8; Psalm 126:5)?
- (f) *Family:* Read Esther 4:1-3. How do we usually respond to tragic or difficult situations? What should be our first response? Are tears appropriate for believers? How would you have responded if you had been a Jew living in Persia?

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Esther 4:4-8.** How does Esther learn about the situation? What is her concern for Mordecai?
- (b) Why didn't Mordecai go into the gates himself and speak to Esther about what was happening?
- (c) Why doesn't she go out to him herself? What could be the reasons?
- (d) Read Psalm 33:12-22. What promise does the Bible give for a nation that follows the Lord? Is this the same as the promise to Israel? What is the difference?
- (e) What warning is given in Psalm 33:16-17 and Psalm 20:7? What are we told in Psalm 118:9? What promise do we find in Psalm 33:18?
- (f) *Family:* Read Esther 4:4-8 and Psalm 33:16-22. What are some things that people tend to put their confidence and trust in instead of in God? Why is it foolish to trust in other things instead of God? Are there any situations that you have trouble trusting God for? Read 1 Peter 5:7 and turn each of these situations over to Him in prayer.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Esther 4:10-14.** What reply does Esther send to Mordecai? Why can't she go and speak to the king?
- (b) How many days has it been since Esther has spoken to the king? What does this tell you about the risk she is facing?
- (c) What warning does Mordecai give to Esther (Esther 4:13)? Why should this concern her?
- (d) What was the basis of Mordecai's confidence about the situation? Why would he have this confidence (1 Samuel 12:22; Psalm 94:14; Psalm 106:8)?
- (e) How can we have the same confidence as believers (Romans 8:28-32; Hebrews 13:5-6)?
- (f) *Family:* Read Esther 4:10-14 and Romans 8:28-32. Discuss how the sovereign control of God should give us confidence in every situation. In Romans 8, make a list of the reasons that we can be confident in even the most difficult situations. Where was Mordecai's confidence? How does he demonstrate this confidence? How do you think his confidence in God might have encouraged Esther? Pray that each of you might learn to trust God in every situation and be an example to others also.

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Esther 4:14.** What was the final thing that Mordecai told Esther that made her realize that perhaps God had placed her in her position for a reason?
- (b) What does Esther 4:14 tell us about our free will? What does it teach us about God's sovereign control?
- (c) How do the two work together in 2 Corinthians 5:19-6:1 and 1 Corinthians 3:6-9?
- (d) Can we know for certain why God has placed us where He has? How is this shown in Mordecai's answer (Esther 4:14)?
- (e) Look at David's response to the death of his child again. Why did he fast (2 Samuel 12:22-23)? What does this teach us about living by God's precepts rather than by God's providence?
- (f) *Family:* Read Esther 4:14 and 2 Corinthians 6:1. Talk about some of the reasons that God has you where He does. How does God use us in accomplishing His will? How does it make you feel to know that you are a co-worker with God? Does He *need* us? Why does He use us to accomplish His purpose and plans? Pray that you might see why God has you in a particular situation or position. Pray that you might be used by Him where you are.

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

- (a) **Read Esther 4:15-17.** How does Esther respond to Mordecai's request? What decision does she make?
- (b) Read 2 Chronicles 20:1-12. How did Jehoshaphat respond to the impossible situation that they were facing? How is this similar to Esther's response?
- (c) Esther's life is in danger (Esther 4:11). What does she decide (Esther 4:16)? What was Paul's attitude about the possible dangers he faced from following the Lord (Acts 20:23-24; Philippians 1:20-21)?
- (d) What did Jesus tell his disciples in John 12:24-26? How is fruit produced in our lives? What promise does Jesus give for all who serve him?
- (e) How is this a decision for every believer (Galatians 2:20; Hebrews 12:3-4)? Summarize the attitude that we ought to have regarding our lives and our obedience to the Lord.
- (f) *Family:* Read Esther 4:15-17 and John 12:24-26. Discuss what it means to lose our lives for his sake? How do we do this? Does this mean that we actually have to die to do this? Or does it refer to something else? Pray that you will have a heart to obey God no matter what the consequences might be for your life.

DAY 6 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

Think back through what you have learned each day this week. Read Esther 4. How do we usually view things that happen to us in life? Is it possible that God has placed you where He plans to use you? How would such an attitude toward life change you? Things about Esther's situation: Is obeying God and doing what is right always the easiest thing to do? What will happen if we do not do the things God desires for us? Pray for your worship service tomorrow that many will realize that God has them here for a purpose. Pray that some who are not Christians might hear and receive the gospel.

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Why God Has You Here

“Who knows whether you have come into the kingdom for such a time as this?”